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THE ZINFANDEL: A HISTORY OF A GRAPE AND ITS WINE

by
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[With this issue of the Wayward Tendrils Newsletter, we proudly present the first installment of wine historian Charles Sullivan's unpublished story of his search for the origin of the Zinfandel grape. Chapter by chapter – in Sullivan's trademark informal and entertaining style – we will follow his scholarly investigations into the early wine literature and see the "mysterious" truth unfold. That Sullivan has chosen our small journal to publish his Zinfandel history, we are honored, yet somewhat astonished. He explains: "The Wayward Tendril membership contains a large percentage of the world audience that really cares much about the question, at least from a scholarly point of view. So, where better?" — Ed.]

CHAPTER 1

HOW I SOLVED THE HISTORICAL MYSTERIES SURROUNDING THE ZINFANDEL, SORT OF.



I have not always been a wine lover. In fact until I was well into my twenties I drank beer at family dinners while others drank wine. But after I got out of college in the late fifties I was caught up by the modern Wine Revolution and

was soon buying jug wine, mostly Zinfandel, from country wineries in the Santa Clara and Livermore Valleys and in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

When we visited these wineries I always talked to the owners. I asked questions about their operations, their history, and the history of winegrowing in the area. I began taking notes and tried to read up on California wine history. There wasn't much and it wasn't very useful.

I had a solid background in historiography and was well schooled on the job of the historian. In the 1960s I wrote several articles for scholarly journals, and a section of a book for a university press on my specialty, Baltic-German history. It didn't take me long to realize that just about the only people reading this work were other historians.

So I gradually shifted my interest to California wine. Meanwhile in 1963 I began reading

Wines & Vines, the wine industry publication. It was loaded with just the sort of information on the current wine scene I wished I could get about the earlier years. I went on to get the bound volumes of the magazine from the state library and read them in reverse. I went back to 1919 when publisher Horatio Stoll founded the publication as *The California Grape Grower*. I always took copious notes. Then I read its predecessor back to 1883. Next it was newspapers, the *San Jose Mercury*, *Sonoma Democrat*, *St. Helena Star*, *California Farmer*, *Alta California*, all back to their earliest 19th century issues.

By 1967 this activity had become a very serious avocation and I gave up my pursuit of Baltic history. I didn't know where this was going, but I was gaining a pretty good picture of California wine history, which I couldn't get out of any book. I began some really serious research, spending a lot of time at U.C. Berkeley's Bancroft Library. By the end of the



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1960s I had read and indexed most of the wine country newspapers, trade journals and government publications produced before the 1920s.

In 1976, at a social event with kindred souls, I took my first directed steps toward solving the apparent mystery of the Zinfandel's origins. The event was a dinner at our place. The guests were Dave and Fran Bennion, founders of Ridge Vineyards, and Joe and June Swan. Late in the evening, after I had probably been pontificating on some historical matter, Dave fixed me seriously and said something like, "Charles, all you do is talk about California wine history. Why don't you do something?" I think the conversation then went something like this:

"What should I do?"

"What do historians do? They tell stories about the past, don't they?"

"Yes, but they also try to answer questions about the past. The answer isn't always a story."

"So, answer a question; solve a problem."

"Like what?" I asked.

"Aren't there any historical mysteries about California wine that need solving?"

"Well, there is always Zinfandel. The Haraszthy thing. I just don't buy it anymore."

At this point I think Joe Swan cast his stern gaze on me. "Charles, why don't you just do it?"

I thought I could. The previous summer I had read a fascinating and lengthy 1885 article in the *San Francisco Evening Post* by a Sonoma journalist/historian. He quoted a long letter from an 1857 neighbor of Agoston Haraszthy telling in detail of the coming of the Zinfandel to Sonoma from a Napa vineyardist who had acquired it from a friend who had brought it from Massachusetts in 1852. He challenged the story that had Haraszthy bringing it to California in the 1860s.

It was the memory of that article that moved me to take up the dinner challenge of those two Masters of Zinfandel. I put together all my notes and read some early books on East Coast viticulture and concluded that the Zinfandel story accepted by practically everyone in the California wine industry for years was almost pure hokum. Haraszthy had not introduced the Zinfandel to California. It had come here from the East Coast in the early 1850s where it had been grown for years as a hot house table grape.

I wrote Professor A.D. Webb of UC Davis and told him of my findings. I wondered whether they would be of interest at the annual conference of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture. He invited me to present my paper. This I did and then had my findings published in *Wines & Vines, Vintage*

Magazine, and in the quarterly of the California Historical Society.¹

Boston

My next step was to head east in 1983 and examine the agricultural journals, newspapers, and manuscript collections on the East Coast. My wife and I first settled in the Boston area and began leafing through such forgotten periodicals as the *New England Farmer*, *Massachusetts Ploughman*, *Yankee Farmer*, *American Gardener's Magazine*, and dozens of others. Not one of these periodicals was on microfilm, but many of them had detailed annual indexes. We paged through them, year after year, piling up sheaves of notes on anything even vaguely touching on viticulture or on any of the many players in the viticultural drama that was to send California its first loads of *Vitis vinifera* after the American Conquest and the war with Mexico (1846-48).

Eventually we collected here lots of new material on the Zinfandel between 1830 and 1850, all of which fit nicely with the conclusions I'd drawn from my previous research. There was only one hitch in the operation; the Massachusetts Horticultural Society Library was closed for restoration and repairs, and no amount of pliant supplication would gain us entry. The director simply couldn't imagine how his collection could help us answer an important historical question about California wine. Nonetheless, we were content in the knowledge that the New England story of the Zinfandel was now tellable and that the somewhat sketchy picture I had put together in 1976 was basically accurate.

National Agricultural Library

From Boston we headed south to the National Agricultural Library at Beltsville, Maryland, just outside Washington, DC. There I wanted to see everything that might add light on the Zinfandel story, but specifically I wanted to search the Prince Family manuscript collection. The family's Linnaean Botanic Garden at Flushing, Long Island, was the first commercial nursery in the United States. Anyone conversant with American viticulture history knows about William Robert Prince's 1830 *Treatise on the Vine*. In it the author made an oblique reference to Zinfandel. The year before our trip east I had learned from U.C. Davis Professor Maynard Amerine that the yearly catalogues of the Prince nursery also had interesting references to the grape. And John McGrew, the Research Plant Pathologist at Beltsville, had warned me to bring lots of note paper for the rest of the gigantic Prince collection, which the library there had acquired at the end of the 19th century. McGrew had been correct. The Prince manuscripts yielded loads of Zinformation, including

some nice hints as to how the vine got here from Europe.

I also looked at some 19th century materials on Italian viticulture since there was very good evidence to support the existence today of a vine in southern Italy that is genetically identical to our Zinfandel, the Primitivo.

Meanwhile I had taken a few steps to unlock the mystery of the European origins of the Zinfandel. There is no evidence that an Old World vine ever grew there under the Zinfandel name. But what we call Zinfandel in California today is clearly a vinifera vine from the Old World. The Italian Primitivo connection is obvious, but to date no one is sure how that vine arrived in southern Italy. I was convinced that central Europe was the true source.

Since then the DNA research at UC Davis, led by Professor Carole Meredith, has confirmed that the Primitivo and the Zinfandel are genetically identical. She has also found that a grape grown along the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic, the Plavac Mali, is a very close kin to our Zinfandel. This makes perfect sense, since this area, in Croatia today, was part of the Kingdom of Hungary and the Austrian Empire in the 19th century. And Bari, where the Primitivo is grown, is also on the Adriatic, south of the Dalmatian coast.

In 1980 we went to Vienna and visited the Schonbrunn horticultural collection. I was able to establish some solid contacts there which might be helpful in my search, since I was coming to accept the fact that the Zinfandel might have come from the old Kingdom of Hungary, which was part of the Austrian Empire in the 19th century. We even traveled down to Haraszthy's hometown of Futak, which is today in Serbia, part of what was Yugoslavia. But in the 19th century it was in the Kingdom of Hungary inside the Austrian Empire. There was no sign of any Hungarian influence in that town even though the surrounding province still has a sizeable Hungarian population. And I could get no information on anyone named Haraszthy who had ever lived there, even when I wrote Yugoslav and Hungarian historical archives.

But I came home in 1980 convinced that my part of the story of Zinfandel would have to begin on the East Coast of the United States. I am now fairly certain that the vine came to Long Island from Vienna, the capital of the Austrian empire, probably in 1829. But I am also convinced that the archives in Vienna are of no use in extending this knowledge.

Now let us go to the United States in the 1820s and 1830s, when James Monroe and Andrew Jackson were in the White House, when Thomas Jefferson was still alive and writing delightful letters-to-the-editor of eastern farm journals, and

when Americans were developing a passionate interest in a systematic and scientific approach to all aspects of agriculture and horticulture. Not the least of these interests was viticulture.

CHAPTER 2

SOJOURN IN THE EAST

Americans in the English colonies of North America grew grapes from Florida to New England. In the days of the early republic they took them west to the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. They were most successful when they raised grapes to eat. There were no great successes in the field of winemaking, although there were many admirable failures.

The grapes the Americans used fall into three categories. There were the native varieties found growing here, the European vinifera varieties transported to the New World, and chance hybrids between the first two categories. (In the 19th century American nurserymen began deliberately producing such hybrids.)²

In the more southerly climes winegrowing showed the best potential, due to the climate and the heterogeneity of the population. But as one moves north along the eastern seaboard one finds fewer and fewer who thought of viticulture in connection with wine production, rarely north of the middle colonies, later states. You could draw a line north of Long Island and east of the Hudson River Valley as a sort of geographer's limit of serious winegrowing.

Viticulture as a source of table grapes was another matter. Between 1810 and 1835 Massachusetts saw the development of an interesting horticultural fad that gradually grew to something of a small but serious commercial enterprise.

This hobby, which was soon coining its adherents serious money, was the growing of grapes in hot houses, but not simply for the protection of the plants in the icy winter climate. The special fad that grew here from ideas already flourishing in England called for vines to be forced by artificial means of heating so that they produced marketable bunches of delicious dessert grapes in March and April, when the ground outside the hot house might still be deep in snow. New Englanders could draw on a long English experience in this complex culture, first described in detail in a nurseryman's handbook in 1724.³

It sounds easy but it was tricky getting it straight. First you had to have plenty of free time and some capital. (I have yet to find a humble dirt farmer involved in such a venture.) Step one was to build a glass greenhouse facing south with adjustable lights (windows) to let in a little air on clear cool late-

winter days when the vines inside might fry in temperatures over 95°F. To take care of the freezing days, and particularly nights, a heating system had to be installed near the greenhouse with pipes that conveyed heated air to it. Usually there was a hot water furnace with many cords of wood stacked nearby. A trusted servant usually kept the thing going through the night.

In the first year the vine got a normal greenhouse regimen. Then the following March forcing began; year two you turn up the heat on February 15; year three on the first. You move it back fifteen days each year until you have the furnace roaring on December 1. By then the vines are dormant in the New England climate. The idea was gradually to trick the vines into thinking that spring had arrived but two months after they had lost their leaves in the fall. It worked.

J. Fisk Allen, then the leading American authority on the process, tells us that buds start pushing around January 20. By February 10 many vines have shoots two and three feet long. By mid-February most varieties have blossomed and Allen figured he'd usually have to start thinning bunches for higher flavor by March 1. Dark grapes started coloring in April. Allen noted that his Zinfindal (note the spelling) colored later in the month. He usually was able to harvest this variety in May or early June. Of course, Allen was describing what he thought were the best practices for top quality. If you pushed harder, earlier, with earlier ripening varieties, you didn't have to wait until May. April bunches on the Boston market brought up to \$2.00 per pound. (That's about \$25.00 in the 1990s when corrected for price inflation in constant dollars.) May grapes only commanded about \$1.25.

One of the facts that helped propel this forcing culture beyond the greenhouse stage in the 1830s in Boston were the London prices for top quality April grapes reported in English gardener publications. Allen tells us that an equivalent of over \$50.00 per pound in 1990 dollars was not unheard of when this market was first developing.⁴

Several New England greenhouses had been built in the 18th century, the first in the Boston area by Andrew Feneuil in the 1750s. Between 1800 and 1810 several men of means built them with the specific intent of raising vinifera grapes for eating. The forcing fad was still a few years away. One such gentleman central to the solution of the Zinfandel mystery was Samuel Perkins, who built his greenhouse near Brookline and had marked success at an early date, particularly with the Black Hamburg and Muscat of Alexandria varieties.⁵

Perkins and others like him from Long Island to southern Maine read English gardeners'

publications and ordered vines directly from English nurserymen. They were often just as interested in apples, plums and pears, but those are part of a different story. We can get a very clear picture of grape varieties available by reading English books and periodicals from the 1720s on and from American horticultural periodicals (there weren't any that dealt strictly with viticulture).

One thing clear about these imported varieties is that virtually every one of them successful in New England could be found in English nurseries before they arrived here. We could classify almost all of them as table grapes today, but there were also a few that have been used successfully to make good wine.

The list below of such varieties is partial, perhaps amounting to less than one quarter of the varieties we know grew in New England greenhouses. But together they probably account for 95% of the grapes grown there, *except that one variety, well known in Boston by the 1830s, is not on the list.* That is because it never appeared on any English nursery list nor in any English publication from the 1720s to the 1860s. (Guess which variety I am referring to!) I have also included three wine varieties (*) which Allen and others thought were good eating and were occasionally raised for that purpose in New England. Watch this one (+) for future reference.

Black Hamburg(h)
Muscat of Alexandria
Black Lombardy
Black Prince
Cannon Hall Muscat
Grizzly (grey) Muscat
White Frontignan (Muscat of Frontignan)
Golden Chasselas
Royal Muscadine Syrian
Black St. Peters (+)
Sweetwater
Verdelho (*)
Red Traminer (*)
White Riesling (*)

The vine which doesn't appear in the English catalogues was the Zinfandel, or Zinfindal, as it was spelled in New England almost always and in California off and on until the late 1860s. But the same vine may have been, I'd prefer to say most certainly was, in English nurseries, tagged with a different, far more conventionally Anglo-Saxon name—the Black St. Peters. One thing we know for sure is that whatever arrived in California in the 1850s under that name, and survived as identifiable, was the same vine that was by the 1870s universally

accepted as the Zinfandel by vineyardists in the Golden State.

George Gibbs

The Zinfandel / Zinfindal came to Boston in the nursery pots of George Gibbs of Long Island, an amateur horticulturist much interested in viticulture. His name is all but forgotten, except that his wife's name survives attached to a variety she brought from Smithsville, North Carolina, in 1816 to Long Island and presented to William Prince, the noted nursery-man. He named it for her – the Isabella, one of the East Coast's most popular native varieties.⁶

Beginning in 1820 Gibbs made several importations of vines from Europe. We have a record of his 1822 acquisitions from the Austrian Imperial nursery collection in Vienna. There were 28 varieties, five of them from the Kingdom of Hungary, then an important part of the Austrian Empire. But until 1868 Vienna was the administrative center of the empire. After that date Hungarian autonomy was established within the Empire. Before that date the Imperial botanical collection, for all the empire, including Hungary, was housed in Vienna. (One must keep in mind that for most of the 19th century large parts of northern Italy were also part of the Austrian Empire, as was much of the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic. Thus, when we talk of Zinfandel in this collection and its possible relatives today in these areas, we must keep in mind the geopolitical realities.) There was no hint of Zinfandel in this Gibbs importation, although it did include the Frankenthal, which is of some interest in this investigation.⁷

William Prince

At this point we need to look again at the Prince family. William Prince, Sr. (1725-1802) established the first commercial nursery in the United States at Flushing on Long Island. In 1793 his son, William Jr., set up the Linnaean Botanic Garden nearby and turned it into the most important nursery in the country. Eventually the property came to his son, William Robert (1795-1869), who specialized in viticulture and wrote his well known *Treatise on the Vine* in 1830. Written with the help of his father, this work, when compared to any previous text on American viticulture, was "of an entirely different and higher order," in the words of historian Thomas Pinney.⁸

The Princes also imported vines from Central Europe in the 1820s, both from Hungary and Germany. (It must be noted here that when the term "Germany" was used at this early date it meant a place where German language and culture were

dominant. There was no country called Germany until the unification process of 1870-71.) But only the Black St. Peters and the Frankenthaler in the Prince catalogues for those years have any bearing on this investigation. In 1829 Gibbs received a shipment of vines from Vienna and sent Prince a list of them with a note, "You may depend on as genuine as I recd. them from the Imperial Garden at Schoenbrunn." There is no Zinfandel listed, but there is an unnamed "rough black" grape from Hungary, "prolific, a very good grape." We know not what this variety was, but later, when Prince began listing Zinfindal in his nursery catalogue, he noted that it had been "introduced by the late George Gibbs...from Germany." We can't be sure which of Gibbs' shipments is meant, but we can be very sure that Prince thought this to be a process by which the Zinfandel came to America.⁹

An entry in Prince's 1830 *Treatise* later confounded Californians searching for the origins of the Zinfandel. In a list of foreign varieties of recent introduction are two listings for the "Black Zinfandel of Hungary." One of them was "parsley leaved." Was this our Zinfandel? We shall see that this is very unlikely, since the Zinfindal in the Prince nursery came from Boston, by way of George Gibbs. And later the learned J. Fisk Allen, first ever to give a description of our Zinfandel, carefully and explicitly avoided such an assumption. We shall probably never know what this vine mentioned in Prince's early book was. He never again made reference to it. And has anyone ever seen a parsley-leaved Zinfandel vine?

We are not through with 1830. That year George Gibbs went to Boston for the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society (MHS), of which both he and Prince were corresponding members. There he made a fine display of his "foreign," that is, vinifera vines, his European imports. Also that fall the aforementioned Samuel Perkins sent a load of vines from Boston to Prince on Long Island. Among them was the Black St. Peters. That same year Perkins had several large importations of vines from England and France. One vine he called Frankendelt (cf. Frankenthal). Confusing as these rather unconnected data appear, out of it comes a hard fact. Perkins was so taken by one of these vines that he was soon advertising cuttings for sale in Boston of the "Zenfandel... by some called the Black Prince." Two years later William B. Roberts, who ran Perkins' nursery, advertised "Zenfendal" vines for sale in Boston. Next year Perkins was selling the vines and actually displayed "Zenfendal" grapes at the MHS annual meeting. Next year Charles M. Hovey, Boston's leading nurseryman, praised the flavor of the "Zinfindal," and recommended it as a table grape.¹⁰

For the next ten years horticulture publications were full of notices for Zinfindal, now generally thus spelled. It had become a table grape for the forcing house, usually on the Boston market in June and July. J. Fisk Allen was showing the vine in 1845 and soon would apply his scholarly powers to the grape.¹¹

We might ask why no one thought to test the Zinfindal for its winemaking potential. In this situation the answer is obvious. New Englanders had given up even considering vinifera, no matter how grown, for wine. In 1825 John Lowell had summed it up in the *New England Farmer*. "Cider tastes good here ... Wine tastes terrible." To the south people like Prince did keep up hope for years. But New Englanders who drank wine bought it in other climes. In 1840 the census figures for grape wine produced in Massachusetts that year listed only 1,095 gallons.¹²

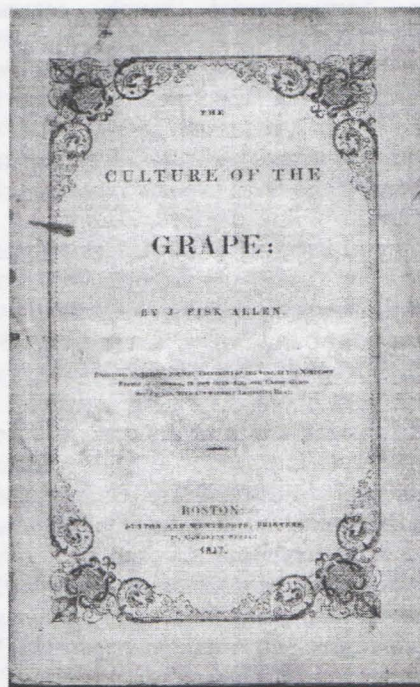
The grape growing fad in New England remained strong through the 1840s. Professionals and serious amateurs exchanged vines and technical information, they held their shows, and they contributed learned papers to the local press and to agricultural periodicals. By the last half of the decade the whole set of scholarly and commercial interrelations had become well organized enough for one man to bring it all together in one volume for the interested reader.

John Fisk Allen

John Fisk Allen of Salem was a scholarly man and a practical botanist, the first person in America to produce a really good hybrid grape variety when he crossed the Isabella, which he got from Mr. Prince, with the vinifera Chasselas de Fontainbleau. Cornell's Professor U. P. Hedrick considered Allen's feat in 1844 one of the greatest events in the history of American viticulture, "surpassed only by that of the introduction of the Concord" in 1852.¹³

In 1846 nurseryman Charles Hovey, the publisher of the *Magazine of Horticulture*, encouraged Allen to put it all together in an extended article for that publication. It came out the next year and was soon followed by a slightly expanded version in book form (55 pages). In 1848 Allen's detailed guide to viticulture appeared (247 pages). It went through numerous printings and five editions into the 1860s. In the 1847 article, Allen described the varieties with which he had personal experience. He gave more lines to the Zinfindal than any other variety. His description is of the vine we know today as Zinfandel. He noted that he could not find the vine described in any book, a point he continued to make in later editions of his own work. He went further to say that it was probably a German grape and that it

had first been grown around Boston by Samuel Perkins, "who received it from a gentleman in New York State...." The reader will recall that "Germany" in 1847 meant the vast region in Central Europe where German was spoken. And we know full well that the gentleman in New York was George Gibbs.¹⁴



[ALLEN, *Culture of the Grape*, 1847]

Allen also made much of the similarity between the Zinfindal and the Frankendale which, "resembles the Zinfindal in every particular" except sweetness of flavor. Recall that Gibbs and Prince both had vines in their collections with names quite similar. Allen had little to say concerning the Black St. Peters in 1847 but by 1853 his more detailed description was fairly close to that of his Zinfindal. And he thought that the St. Peters might be the same as a variety called Black Prince.

In the 1855 edition Allen took up the fact that Prince wrote about a "Black Zinfandel, of Hungary" in his 1830 *Treatise*, but he had no idea what it was or whether it was the same as his Zinfindal. In penning this note Allen probably forgot an exchange of letters with Prince in 1846 — and a shipment of vines. On November 3 Allen had sent Prince some "Zinfandel" cuttings in response to an October request, which Allen had answered October 28 with reference to "Zinfindal." From then on Prince began carrying the Zinfindal in his catalogues as a vine from Germany "introduced by the late George Gibbs." I don't want to think about why they used different spellings, but they never used "Zinfandel." So we best not worry

about that entry in the 1830 *Treatise*. It would be nice to know what Prince meant sixteen years earlier. We shall see that this 1830 entry became an important element in the construction of the Haraszthy legend and the Zinfandel in the 1880s.

So what do we know from all this? I think that the traceable Zinfandel line is clearly Gibbs-Perkins-Allen-Prince. Unfortunately we have no smoking gun reference to the vine's arrival in Gibbs' nursery. Could it have been that "rough black" grape? Or could Prince's Zinfandel have come from Gibbs? And then they forgot it? And with parsley leaves? Come on!

Did it come from the Imperial collection in Vienna? Probably. From Hungary? Quite likely, so long as we keep in mind how huge the area of that portion of the Austrian Empire was in the 19th century. (Much of what is Croatia today was a part of Hungary then.) Now, who will finance a search of the files of the Hofarchiv in Vienna?

In the early 1850s William Robert Prince came to California, taking his chance with some placer mining and collecting seeds from native plants to send home to Long Island. Later in his "notebook on grapes," now in the National Agricultural Library, he commented on the Zinfandel in California and implied that he had seen it growing there. Some years before Antoine Delmas had proved (1859) that Zinfandel made an excellent table wine, Prince suggested that Zinfandel grapes would make fine raisins in the Golden State where, he wrote, the vine was also known as the "Black Sonora."

If he, or any of those New Englanders who knew the vine, had seen it growing in California, doesn't it follow that they all knew what they were looking at? Those troopers from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society who came and stayed in California and who helped establish Northern California viticulture certainly knew what the vine and its grapes looked like. Some writers have questioned whether the Zinfandel in California was the same as grown in New England. They might consider whether a man like Frederick Maconday, who grew the Zinfandel in Massachusetts, and brought it from the Bay State to California, might not have known what he and his fellow New Englanders in California were doing.

Before we depart from our sojourn in the east it is worth noting what happened in later years to all the vinifera growing in New England. To make a short story of it, the hot house, forcing fad petered out. In the 1850s the discovery of the Concord variety, perfect for outdoor culture, turned almost everyone's head. I have traced this change by reading the proceedings of the MHS to the 1920s, searching in vain for some reference to Zinfandel

after the 1850s. By the late 1850s native varieties, crosses, and hybrids were all the rage. The Concord made a satisfactory wine in the Massachusetts environment and it was to New England taste. By 1857 a Boston man was making 20,000 commercial gallons per year.

In the 1860s the darling varieties were the Concord, Delaware, Iona, and Allen's Hybrid. In 1865 Hovey wrote, "The grape fever here rages higher and higher each succeeding year." And then in the 1870s vinifera table grapes began arriving from California via the newly completed transcontinental railroad.

Vinifera varieties still appeared at the MHS exhibits, but the varieties were almost never named in the proceedings. When Allen died in 1876, Hovey lamented that the "circle of old cultivators is narrowing." By 1878 no vinifera was shown at the annual meeting. In an editorial the secretary of the MHS did not lament the decline. There were now better native grapes to grow at home and good vinifera grapes were available from California.

Then in the 1880s we begin to see vinifera at the annual shows. But the varieties were very limited in number, mostly Black Hamburg, Muscat of Alexandria, Syrian, and Muscat of Frontignan. There were a few others but never a mention of Zinfandel/Zinfandel. In 1926 Archibald Wagstaff gave a paper to the Society on "Growing Grapes under Glass." The tone of his comments suggested that he had come up with something new.

J. Fisk Allen penned his *Practical Treatise* just a year before events in California would draw New Englanders to that far shore like a magnet. They came by the thousands and some brought with them their horticultural knowledge; a few even brought their precious nursery stock.

ENDNOTES

1. *Wines & Vines* (February 1978): 18; *Vintage* (April 1979): 42; *California History* (Summer 1978): 114.
2. See Pinney, *History of Wine in America* (Berkeley 1989), 55-229, for the best history of this early viticulture. For a less thorough, but delightful history, see U.P. Hedrick, *Grapes of New York* (Albany 1908).
3. W. Wilson. *Treatise on Forcing Early Fruit* (London 1777); George W. Johnson. *The Grape Vine...* (London 1847): 18-19.
4. J. Fisk Allen. *Practical Treatise in the Culture and Treatment of the Grape Vine* (New York 1855):

24, 96-97, 135-139. This edition is more complete than the earlier two (1847 and 1848).

5. Daniel Denison Slade. *The Evolution of Horticulture in New England* (New York 1895): 174-176.

6. T. V. Munson. *Foundations of American Grape Culture* (Denison 1909): 166. It was a chance vinifera/native hybrid originally found by a certain I. G. Swift of Dorchester, South Carolina, later a neighbor of the Gibbs family in Brooklyn. *The American Farmer* (Baltimore) (January 31, 1823): 360.

7. This "Kingdom" inside the Austrian Empire was more than three times as large as post World War II Hungary. It included parts of what is today Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Rumania; *The American Farmer* (Baltimore)(March 22, 1822): 415.

8. A catalogue produced by the NAL in 1976 is titled *The Prince Family Manuscript Collection*.

9. *New England Farmer* (Boston), (July 25, 1828): 12; *American Farmer* (November 16, 1827): 276; Prince catalogue of 1855 in the NAL.

10. *New England Farmer* (October 15, 1830): 13; Prince's "American Fruit Book," personal manuscript: 183; *New England Farmer* (October 15, 1830): 103; (November 2, 1831): 16; MHS proceedings (1833): 28-29; (1834): 21; *Magazine of Horticulture* (1835) 1: 459.

11. MHS proceedings (1840): 29; (1844): 62; (1845): 90; *Magazine of Horticulture* (1842) 7: 200; *New England Farmer* (October 9, 1839): 129.

12. January 7, 1825; *Yankee Farmer* (May 15, 1841).

13. Hedrick, 165-166.

14. *Magazine of Horticulture* (1847): 1-47; Allen, *The Culture of the Grape* (Boston 1847); *A Practical Treatise ...* (Boston, 1855). This enlarged third edition is the most useful and the most readily available.



Two Recent Wine Books REVIEWED

[With sincere thanks to Tendril Hudson Cattell and his *Wine East* magazine for permission to reprint the following book reviews. — Ed.]

Wines from Chile by Jürgen Mathäus. Translated by Philip Jenkins. 144 pages. Amsterdam and Cologne: Qué Más. Hardbound, \$24.95.

It is time for a new book on the wines of Chile. The modernization of the wine industry that began in the mid-1980s soon led to wines being made in an international style for export. In 1995 more than 110 million bottles were exported.

Contributing to the modernization process was an infusion of foreign capital which began coming importantly into Chile in the early 1990s, most of it from France. In some cases substantial investments were made; in others, new wineries or wholly owned subsidiaries were formed. A number of big names have come into Chile since Miguel Torres founded his own *bodega* in 1979. More recent examples from the 1990s include Lafite-Rothschild with Los Vascos, Cos d'Estournel with Aquitania, Larose-Trintaudon with Casas del Toqui, Grand Marnier with Casa Lapostolle/Domaine Rabat, and Mondavi with Errázuriz.

Jürgen Mathäus, the author, has been a wine journalist for the past fifteen years and spent six years as chief editor of *Weinwirtschaft*. He has lived in South America and visits there regularly. His book covers geography, climate, soil, grape varieties, winegrowing and cellar technology in addition to information about travel to Chile and a vintage chart of the wines. In the second part of the book, forty-five wineries are discussed in some detail. Many color photographs are included.

All in all, this book offers a good introduction to the modern wine industry in Chile and tells how it got that way.

Portugal's Wines and Winemakers by Richard Mayson. New revised edition, xiv + 250 pp. South San Francisco: The Wine Appreciation Guild. Hardbound, \$34.95.

Portugal joined the European Union in 1986, and the first edition of Mayson's book was published six years later in 1992. Another six years have passed and a second edition of the book has now been published, a sure indicator of the changes that are occurring in that normally conservative country.

The first edition of *Portugal's Wines and Winemakers* was reviewed in the July-August, 1993, issue of *Wine East*, and the summary judgment still stands: "Well written, accurate and informative, this up-to-date book on Portugal and its wines is a worth-

while addition to a wine library."

New to this edition are a foreword by Hugh Johnson, an author's preface, and sixteen pages of color photographs. Revisions range from the normal updates of individual wineries to more extensive rewriting in such areas as the demarcated Dão region where greater changes are taking place. Readers who need updated information or who want a good introduction to the wines of modern Portugal should find that this edition meets their needs.



BOOKS & BOTTLES

by
Fred McMillin

Memorable Wine & Food

The Book: *A Wine and Food Bedside Book* by Claude Morny. Selected from *Wine and Food* under the editorship of André L. Simon. With a Foreword by H. W. Yoxall and wood engravings by Yvonne Skargon. London: The International Wine and Food Publishing Co. Printed by the Trinity Press, 1972.

In 1933 André Simon (1877-1970) founded the Wine and Food Society (later, International Wine and Food Society) and the following year the journal of *Wine and Food*. Soon after Simon's death, Society secretary Claude Morny compiled this anthology of some seventy of the journal articles, many by André Simon himself. Claude Morny gave us an autographed copy when, a year after publication, my wife and I were flown from Teheran to London by the Society to present a program on the history of Persian food and wine at their 908th meeting.

Here are some highlights from this charming volume.

■ **A Memorable Meal** (André Simon) – It was at Versailles. I dined with Louis Pasteur's daughter, son-in-law, and grandson. The wine was a superb 1858 Lafite, a bottle left over from some that had been given by the Rothschilds to Pasteur for his research work on fermentation.

■ **Queen Elizabeth I** (André Simon) – The greatest gastronomic contrast between her time and the present is the use of water. In those days only the

absolutely destitute dared drink it. Ale for breakfast, before work, and wine in the evening before bed, was what the Queen drank. Bordeaux wine was one of the cheapest of the wines while sherry was the most fashionable and expensive.

■ **Keats** (Denzil Batchelor) – The favorite wine of Keats was claret; he peppered his tongue to heighten its flavor.

■ **A Tribute to Italy** (André Simon) – It was in Italy that forks were invented; it was to Italy that caviar was first sent from Greece; and it was in Italy that pigs were first trained to find truffles.

■ **A Tribute to Wine** (André Simon) – There is a lamp of civilization burning, its bright flicker a beacon; the tree of Life, the Vine still her ancient ruby yields.

■ **Mission Impossible** (Antoine Deutschbein) – In Paris shortly after World War I, a Polish friend of mine told me that Warsaw's top restaurant's most expensive dessert wine came from California! So I visited the restaurant, and imagine my surprise when I found that it was from the Franciscan Missions, produced a century and a half ago. The wine was light brown in color, rather syrupy, in taste resembling sweet Malaga [possible source of California's Mission grape], and in good condition.

■ **Napoleon in Exile** (A first translation by André Simon) – [In his final years Napoleon was a British prisoner, exiled to the barren island of St. Helena off the west coast of Africa, administered by a no-nonsense British governor.] The greatest chef of the 19th century, Antonin Carême, had a friend, Chandelier, Napoleon's last chef, who told a story about Napoleon. Carême wrote up the story and many years later, Simon found it and translated it into English. A few tidbits:

■ **The Food** – Napoleon could bring in his own chef. He wrote his mother requesting a French chef, and his sister sent hers, M. Chandelier. But, the Little Corporal was NOT allowed to order his own food supplies. Instead, the Governor provided the supplies, "sending only the worst there was . . . Flour for bread from the Cape full of sand, owing to the defective mill-stones. Macaroni from Milan was stale, as was the Parmesan cheese, etc."

■ **The Wine** – But while Napoleon could not order his own food, he was allowed to bring in his own wine. For years, the Emperor had always enjoyed a half a bottle of Burgundy's Chambertin with each main meal. So, his June 1816 order listed 1,140 bottles, but NO Burgundy. Instead Napoleon

had to make do with 300 bottles of Bordeaux.

■ **Fowl Play** – While Chef Chandelier had no suspicions of possible poisoning, he did mention some fowl play. "There was no game on the island except on rare occasions, there were a few red-legged partridges and pheasants ... The Governor usually kept them for his own table, rarely sending any to the Emperor."

The Bottles: We've mentioned Burgundy, Bordeaux, Italy and California's Mission grape. Here are some bottles that have done well in my recent panel blind-tastings.

★ California – 100% Mission Wine, Malvado Vineyards, Amador County. \$12.

★ Italy – Castello d'Albola Chianti Classico, 1996. \$12.

★ Bordeaux – Ch. Larose-Trintaudon, Haut-Medoc, 1994. \$18.

★ Burgundy – Hospice de Beaune, Premier Cru, Maison Louis Jadot, 1993. Jeroboam. Price: don't ask.



ATTENTION ANDRÉ L. SIMON COLLECTORS —

HELP!!

The Endeavor Collection of Terra Nova Productions and Isaac Oelgart are pleased to announce their plans for publishing a major bibliographical work on André Simon entitled, **Bibliotheca Simoniana: A Bibliographical Tribute to André L. Simon.**

The edition will be limited to about 500 finely printed copies in an attractive large format illustrated with tipped-in pages from Simon's various works. Your editor, Gail Unzelman, is the lead bibliographer, assisted by Isaac Oelgart, who will also contribute a chapter on Simon as Book Collector and Bibliographer. Discussions with other contributors are under way as it is our goal to make this book a useful and fitting tribute to Simon.

In order to make this work as complete and as accurate as possible, we solicit the help of the Wayward Tendrils! Any and all Tendrils who have Simon holdings of rare, unusual, one of a kind items, or with unusual inscriptions that have a bearing on the history of the book, or indeed any item you think might be of interest, please contact Gail Unzelman.



NEWS & NOTES



ROSTER UPDATES

Welcome! to our new members: **Bill Henry**, proprietor of Sierra West Books in California's gold'n'wine country (14872 Fine Drive, Grass Valley, CA 95949, ☎ 530.273.6384), has a special interest in George Husmann, Fr. Muench, Henry Shaw, and the "Missouri Grape Controversy: Cynthiana vs Norton." He seeks anything by / on the above. From Holland we welcome **Caspar Wechgelaer**, proprietor of WECHGELAER WINEBOOKS (Jupiterstraat 101, 9742 EV Groningen, Holland; ☎ 31.(0)50.571.3966; Fax 31.(0)50.571.0389; email: casparwechgelaer@wxs.nl. Catalogues issued. And, from Sweden, **Peter Axelson** (Ulricehamnsvägen 35, S-121 39 Johanneshov, Sweden; 0046.(0)8.659.7389 (H) or 0046.(0)8.762.1151 (W), Fax 0046.(0)8.55.61.2688), who has been collecting wine books for some fifteen years, has become a Tendril at the suggestion of bookseller John Thorne. **Isaac Oelgart**, and his PORT LOVER'S LIBRARY – Publishers & Purveyors of Pamphlets & Books on Port Wine, have new contact numbers: ☎ 603.643.4755 (W); Fax 603.643.8668; email (Isaac): tnp@valley.net, or (PLL): pll@valley.net. **Stephen Skelton** notes a new email address: Spskelton@btinternet.com.

THANKS!

A heartfelt toast to Tendril **Hudson Cattell**, editor and publisher of *Wine East*, the splendid grapes and wine bi-monthly, for his generous mention of our wine book collecting society in the May-June issue.

HISTORY OF VEVEY FÊTES DES VIGNERONS

Published for the upcoming 1999 Fête, a history of the magnificent wine celebration of Vevey is now available: Carruzzo-Frey / Ferrari-Dupont, *Du Labeur aux Honneurs: Quatre Siècles d'histoire de la Confrérie des Vignerons de Vevey et ses Fêtes*, 1999. 23 x 28 cm, 272 pages with 271 illustrations, cloth bound. Any collector of Fête memorabilia will definitely want to add this book to the reference shelf. It can be ordered from Bibliotheca Gastronomica, Zürich – ☎ 411.341.9784 or fax 411.341.9790. Price sFr 75 or \$50 US. [See article in this issue by Hans Weiss on this most historical wine festival.]

BIBLIOTHECA VINARIA REPRINT

Martino Fine Books has recently published a reprint of the Holland Press 1979 edition, with interleaves, of this André Simon classic. Inquire of our bookseller members for availability. The price: \$60 USA, or £36.75.

GRAPEVINE BLACK GOO RESEARCH

Tendril **Lucie Morton** has edited the proceedings of the 1998 seminar and workshop, *Black Goo: Symptoms and Occurrence of Grape Declines* (137 pages containing sixteen articles by international experts, over 200 illustrations), which is now available from the International Ampelography Society (1765 Fort Valley Road, Fort Valley, VA 22652; fax 540.933.6987 or ☎ 800.274.4816). Price: \$100 plus \$5 shipping.

ANY CLUES ??

David Campbell (email: thewineguy@cereswine.com) writes of his frustration, having had "absolutely no success in tracking down some form of attribution concerning *The Vineyard* (1727, London)." The title page states the book as "Being the Observations made by a Gentleman in his Travels," while the dedication is signed "S.J." Who is this traveling gentleman author? Even the indefatigable **Eberhard Buehler**, in his *Wine & Gastronomy Catalogue IJKL*, states simply: "The identity of S.J. is unknown." Perhaps one of our British Tendrils has researched this puzzler? Send us a clue.

"CALIFORNIA WINES, 1894"

The Barrel to Bottle Press of **John Thorne** (Books on Wines, Beer, Spirits), English bookseller and avid Tendril, has produced a most interesting little booklet, *California Wines, 1894*, being a "Paper on California Wines read before The Society of Arts, London, on January 31st, 1894, by Chas. F. Oldham, Member of the Firm of Grierson, Oldham & Co." In his introduction to this 16-page facsimile reprint, John gives a brief history of the wine shipping firm and bibliographic information on the pamphlet. Illustrated, in card covers, stapled. Very suitable for gifts and presentations! Available from John at \$6. / £3.75 (including surface mail) or \$7.50 / £4.75 (air mail).

Husmann WANTED!!

As mentioned in the introduction of new members, **Bill Henry** has a special interest in the grape and wine writings of the "Missouri men." He also lists a specific want: an affordable copy of the second edition of George Husmann's *American Grape Growing and Wine-Making, with Several Added Chapters on the Grape Industry of California* — 1883, 1885, 1888 or 1889 printings.

A REMINDER . . .

The Newsletter anxiously awaits your contributions: comments, articles, book reviews, newsy bits about wine books and / or their authors. Send them in!! Don't forget "duplicates" and "wants" lists also!!

WINE QUOTATIONS : SHERLOCK HOLMES

by
Robert C. Ross

[A second quotable-visit with the famous is provided by host Robert Ross as we investigate some Sherlockian mysterious wine matters. — Ed.]



Sherlock Holmes: There are a large number of devoted students of the Sherlock Holmes Canon of sixty tales and related literature, and excellent web sites contain almost anything one would like to know about this fascinating subject.

Sherlockian Holmepage, edited by Chris Redmond. The Source (with searching capabilities)! <http://watserv1.uwaterloo.ca/~credmond/sh.html>

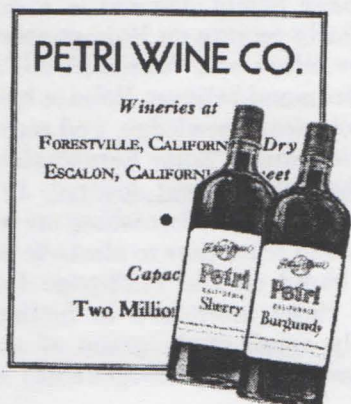
The Hounds of the Internet (a listserve of 500 very active members); see the Sherlockian Holmepage for how to subscribe.

The Baker Street Journal is a hard copy journal of scholarly reports on Holmes-related matters. <http://www.inlink.com/~leonard/BSJFAQ.html>

Chris Redmond believes Holmes had quite a remarkable enological knowledge, and recommends Nicholas Utechin's study, "Some Remarkable Wines," published in the *Baker Street Journal*, 1977. Bob Burr was especially helpful, furnishing me with a list of over two hundred references to alcoholic beverages in the Canon based on the 1122-page Doubleday collection. For those interested in further study, there is a daily email study group of about 600 members who post 30 to 50 messages a day about the Canon.

One fact has puzzled some readers: How could Holmes have afforded to develop such an extensive knowledge? G. Norton, Esquire, aka Private Consulting Detective, comments: "I just don't understand why people think that Holmes and Watson were poor. Remember the 1000 pounds they got from the King of Bohemia alone. Eight hundred pounds a year was considered a "gentleman's income," and a gentleman was required to pay much higher living expenses out of that money — house, private club, servants, etc. Holmes, and often Watson, lived in a much less expensive commercial district and had no servants, until really flushed with money, they acquired the services of a "buttons." In addition to the 1000 pounds (plus first class expenses) from the hereditary king, Holmes received 12,000 pounds from the Duke. I expect that there were many more clients who paid very well

considering the fact that Sherlock Holmes worked for such well-heeled employers as international royalty, the pope, nobility, and American millionaires. In addition, we know from the biographies of Arthur Conan Doyle that he was extremely well paid for his Sherlock Holmes stories and, as a result, became a very wealthy man. If, as the Literary Agent, Dr. Doyle got as much as 20% of the income from Watson's writings, can you imagine how much Dr. Watson, the Author, earned. No, I think that Mr. Holmes did very well, and could have lived in much finer circumstances. After all, he eventually paid Mrs. Hudson a "princely sum" for using her boarding house and must have been able to bear the cost of the secret exits, etc., added to his lodgings. He also had money to support Epicurean feasts when the mood struck him, to dine out in expensive restaurants, travel first class, and afford fine wines, cigars, hand-made cigarettes, and a variety of books — and maintain a variety of other locations for his operations. Perhaps at the start of his career, Mr. Holmes needed someone to share his expenses, but once his name became known, his income soared. Anyway, that's my opinion."



Modern commen-

tators sometimes link Petri wine with Holmes and Watson. The connection arose during the 1930s and 1940s when Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce played Holmes and Watson on the radio, sponsored in part by the Petri Wine Co., Escalon, California. Harry Bartell was an announcer, perhaps best known for his interviews of Dr. Watson (and his Petri Wine commercials, which have been called "haunting"). Possible sources for tapes of the shows and the commercials are www.old-time.com/irc.html and <http://www.otrsite.com/logs/special/erin.html>.

FROM THE CANON:

■ "This bottle was opened by a pocket screw, probably contained in a knife, and not more than an inch and a half long. If you will examine the top of

the cork, you will observe that the screw was driven in three times before the cork was extracted. It has never been transfixed. This long screw would have transfixed it and drawn it up with a single pull. When you catch this fellow, you will find that he has one of these multiplex knives in his possession." — Sherlock Holmes, The Adventure of Abbey Grange, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ "Exactly. These three glasses upon the sideboard have been untouched, I suppose?" "Yes, and the bottle stands as they left it." "Let us look at it. Halloo, halloo! What is this?" The three glasses were grouped together, all of them tinged with wine, and one of them containing some dregs of beeswing. The bottle stood near them, two-thirds full, and beside it lay a long, deeply stained cork. Its appearance and the dust upon the bottle showed that it was no common vintage which the murderers had enjoyed. — Sherlock Holmes, The Adventure of Abbey Grange, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ "What about the wineglasses?" "Can you see them in your mind's eye?" "I see them clearly." "We are told that three men drank from them. Does that strike you as likely?" "Why not? There was wine in each glass." "Exactly, but there was beeswing only in one glass. You must have noticed that fact. What does that suggest to your mind?" — "There are two possible explanations, and only two. One is that after the second glass was filled the bottle was violently agitated, and so the third glass received the beeswing. That does not appear probable. No, no, I am sure that I am right." "What, then, do you suppose?" "That only two glasses were used, and that the dregs of both were poured into a third glass, so as to give the false impression that three people had been here. In that way all the beeswing would be in the last glass, would it not? Yes, I am convinced that this is so." — Sherlock Holmes, The Adventure of Abbey Grange, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.


■ "That is well! That is well!" said he. "May I offer you a glass of Chianti, Miss Morstan? Or of Tokay? I keep no other wines." — Sherlock Holmes, The Sign of the Four, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ This led him to Paganini, and we sat for an hour over a bottle of claret while he told me anecdote after anecdote of that extraordinary man. The afternoon was far advanced and the hot glare had softened into a mellow glow before we found ourselves at the police-station. Lestrade was waiting for us at the door. "A telegram for you, Mr. Holmes," said he. — Sherlock Holmes, The Adventure of the Cardboard Box, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ "There is a cold partridge on the sideboard, Watson, and a bottle of Montrachet. Let us renew our energies before we make a fresh call upon them."

— Sherlock Holmes, *The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ "What! Tokay?" He indicated a heavily sealed dust-covered bottle which stood with two high glasses upon a salver. "May I offer you a glass before your journey?" "No, thanks. But it looks like revelry." "Altamont has a nice taste in wines, and he took a fancy to my Tokay. He is a touchy fellow and needs humoring in small things. I have to study him, I assure you." — Sherlock Holmes, *His Last Bow*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

■ The next [moment] he was gripped at the back of his neck by a grasp of iron, and a chloroformed sponge was held in front of his writhing face. "Another glass, Watson!" said Mr. Sherlock Holmes as he extended the bottle of Imperial Tokay. The thickset chauffeur, who had seated himself by the table pushed forward his glass with some eagerness. "It is a good wine, Holmes." "A remarkable wine, Watson. Our friend upon the sofa has assured me that it is from Franz Josef's special cellar at the Schoenbrunn Palace. Might I trouble you to open the window for chloroform vapor does not help the palate." — Sherlock Holmes, *His Last Bow*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. 



JUST RELEASED!!

California wine historian Ernest P. Peninou, assisted by Gail Unzelman and Michael Anderson, has compiled and recently published a *History of the Sonoma Viticultural District: The Grape Growers, the Wine Makers and the Vineyards* (in the Counties of Sonoma, Marin, Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, Trinity, Del Norte and Siskiyou). In 456 well-illustrated pages, Peninou's narration is supplemented with wine-grape acreage statistics and indexed directories of vineyardists from 1860 to 1960. (See the enclosed brochure for full particulars.) Price: \$60 plus CA sales tax \$4.50 and \$4 shipping. Available from Nomis Press, 149 Gray Court, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. ☎ 707.546.1184.

IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by
Bob Foster



"... for [those] who adore older bubbly,
this book is a must."

■ *2000 Champagnes* by Richard Juhlin. Methusalem, Sweden (Imported by the Wine Appreciation Guild, So. San Francisco, CA), 344 pages, \$60.

With the coming celebrations of the Millennium there has been a renewed interest in fine champagnes. With the media's misreporting of a potential fine Champagne shortage, there's been a rash to buy bottles of top ranked bubbly. But buying older bottles of bubbly has always been difficult. Since most Americans seem to favor the fresher, brighter flavors of newer Champagnes, there has been little demand for aged sparklers. For the few who have developed a taste for these wines, there was no guidance. There are almost no books that have tasting notes on older vintages. Juhlin's ambitious book provides detailed tasting notes on vintage Champagnes dating back to 1900. For that small group of Americans who adore older bubbly this book is a must.

The book is far more than a mere set of detailed tasting notes. He begins with a short history of the region that I found interesting in two respects: it fully accepts the Dom Perignon legend and ignores author Tom Stevenson's theory that the English and not Dom Perignon invented the sparkling wine process; secondly, the work explains in some detail how the region survived Nazi occupation. (In this regard the author points out that Nazi madman Himmler had a plan to blow up all of the Champagne caves at the conclusion of the war so as to eliminate competition for the German sekt industry.) The historical review is followed by sections on the grapes, the methods of making Champagne, and ways to store and serve top notch bubbly. I especially liked the section suggesting itineraries for visiting the region.

After 160 pages of this preparatory and background material, Juhlin begins his discussion of the producers. For each of these enterprises the author gives the phone number, the annual rate of production, the name of the wines produced, the points given to the wine in the latest tasting and the date of the last tasting. Juhlin also gives an indication if he thinks the wine will still improve or if he thinks it is past its prime. He also gives the approximate composition of the blend in the wine. While the author is clearly a big fan of well-aged Champagne, he is not a sycophant. His scores, given on the 100-point scale, range from the 30s to a near

perfect 99. Unlike some modern American wine writers who seem to hand out perfect scores in ever-increasing numbers, Juhlin gives none. In the back of the work the author gives a list of the top one hundred Champagnes he has tasted, headed by the 1938 Krug.

The book is lavishly illustrated with color photographs and drawings. The photograph showing the color changes in blanc de blancs, blends, blanc de noirs and rosés across forty years is superb. My one complaint is that the book was translated from Swedish and no one seems to have done any revisions at all. The translation was apparently carded out in a slavish word-by-word format. For example, would anyone outside of Sweden care about the Swedes' placement in the 1994 World Cup soccer tournament? Probably not. But the translator includes the author's original comments in his summary of the vintages since 1900. Similarly the author cautions against the use of a Champagne wisp. This may be common in Sweden but I've never seen even mention of such a device in the English literature. Several similar local cultural references were included that a skillful editor should have removed from an English language edition.

Regardless, the book contains a wealth of valuable information and detailed tasting notes. Lovers of aged Champagnes (and lovers of the region) will want this book for their libraries. Highly recommended.

"...a wealth of solid historical material ..."

Aged in Oak: The Story of the Santa Barbara Wine Industry written by a team from the Graduate Program in Public Historical Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara (and Published by the Santa Barbara County Vintners' Association, P.O. Box 1558, Santa Ynez, CA. 93460). 92 pages, softback, \$16.95.

For years the Santa Barbara region just did not get the attention it deserved. Thankfully, that pattern has changed and now there is a clamor for Pinot Noir, Syrah and many other major varietal wines coming from this region. As interest in the wines in this area has increased there has been a growing need for a definitive history of wine in the region. This work, written by a team from U.C. Santa Barbara, does a first rate job of providing the material. There are four chapters covering the history of the region from the early Mission days through modern times. A fifth chapter covers modern expansion and experimentation; a sixth chapter offers predictions for the future. (Not surprisingly, the Vintners' Association believes the best is yet to come.) This is followed by a section on

visiting the region and a section on each of the members of the Vintners' Association.

These last two sections give me pause. The book provides a general map of the region showing the location of all of the wineries. But the only reference given is a numbered dot on a rather general map. There are no street addresses for the wineries, no phone numbers, no hours of operation. All you get is a name and a vague map. It makes wine touring a bit hard. The lack of information defeats the very goal of these sections.

Similarly, one section of the book contains beautiful, colored reproductions of wine labels from each member of the Vintners' Association and a description of that producer's wines. But if a reader becomes intrigued and wants to call and buy wine or get on a mailing list, the book is no help because again there are no addresses and no phone numbers.

Finally, I just do not understand the title. Sure there are wild oak trees in the region but no more so than other parts of California. Sure the wines are aged (or over-aged) in oak, but no more so than other regions of California. Perhaps I am just missing the link, but to my mind the title does not seem sufficiently connected to the book or to the region.

Nevertheless, there is a wealth of solid historical material presented in a very readable form with lots of good color photographs. Lovers of the wines from this region will want to add this work to their wine library. Highly recommended.

[Tendrill Bob Foster writes a regular wine-book-review column for the California Grapevine, a bi-monthly newsletter featuring the results of weekly double-blind tastings of California wines. Subscription information: P.O. Box 22152, San Diego, CA 92192. ☎ 619.457.4818. Permission to reprint Bob's book reviews is always appreciated. — Ed.]



MORE ON THE BIG BOTTLES!

by Darrel G. Rosander

[Responding to Bo Simons' quest for the beginnings of over-sized bottles, Tendril Darrel Rosander dug into his wine library and unearthed some fine references to shed further light on the subject. Our thanks to Darrel. — Ed.]



In the article, "Rehoboam or Nebuchadnezzar? Part II: Secular Clues" by Bo Simons (Wayward Tendrils, Vol.9 No.2, April 1999), the following statement was made: "Methuselah was first mentioned in print by André Simon in 1935 (London) in his *A Dictionary of Wine*, which is also the source and date of the first mention of Salmanazar and Balthazar as well."

Checking some slightly earlier books the bottle sizes were also mentioned, in the form

of a list.

Wines. Their Selection, Care and Service, by Julian Street, 1933 first edition and the third printing February 1934 (Gabler 38300) presented a list of bottle sizes in quarts on page 2. Salmanazar in each book is spelled with 'ss' in place of 'z'.

Wine Manual, edited and published by Maison E. H. Glass, Inc., 1934 (not in G) presented a list of bottle sizes in quarts on page 86, again with 'ss' in place of the 'z':

SIZES OF CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES

Split — 1/2 pint	Jeroboam — 4 quarts
Pint — 1/2 quart	Rehoboam — 6 quarts
Quart — 32 oz.	Methuselah — 8 qts
Imperial Qt — 38 oz.	Salmanassar — 10 qts
Magnum — 2 qts	Balthazar — 12 qts

My copy of *A Dictionary of Wine*, by André Simon, 'First published 1936' (New York) (G36720) includes the Nebuchadnezzar while the earlier books do not and spells Salmanazar with the 'z'.

Since the bottle sizes are presented in lists it would appear that the names had been in use.

In *Bottlescrew Days*, by André Simon, 1927 (G36600), the largest bottles given names are magnum and teppit-hen (pages 234 to 239). On pages 245-246 Simon mentions his decanter, circa 1780, of twenty-one quarts, but does not give it a name. [Ed. — See initial letter illustration and below †]

In *English and Irish Antique Glass*, by Derek C. Davis, 1965 (not in Gabler), Simon's decanter is mentioned: "which supposedly is called Nebuchadnezzar."

In *Mouton Rothschild*, by Philippine de Rothschild, 1983 (G34810), photos show pictures of six sizes of bottles, from half to imperial in size. One photo is from the 1930s. Another undated photo shows the bottoms of old bottles in the wine cellar. How old are the bottles? The Mouton label for 1934 lists bottle sizes of jeroboams and imperials.

In *Champagne*, by Henry McNulty, 1988, a photo shows a rehoboam with a vintage date of 1928.

In Serena Sutcliffe's *Champagne*, 1988, on page 202 she mentions a theory that the names originated from Jewish bottle manufacturers.


To close, other Tendril members may want to do future research including review of the following:

- Wine Lists from — Restaurant Voisin, Paris; Jack & Charlie's "Twenty-one", New York; others.
- Retail or wholesale Price Lists.
- Orders or receipts for bottles from glass factories.
- Other books on wine, glass or antiques.

† [Illustration from Wine Trade Loan Exhibition of Drinking Vessels, etc., June-July, 1933, London. — *Spelling of "Teppit-hen" / "tappit-hen" found both ways. See following. — Ed.]*

A Postscript

■ A.J.A. Symons, co-founder with André Simon of the Wine & Food Society, enjoyed the mystery of big bottles in the Autumn 1938 issue of *Wine and Food*, the quarterly journal of the Wine & Food Society:

"... at last the menu promised the solution of a minor problem which has tormented me for too long: what, precisely, *is* a jeroboam? It is, I know, a big bottle; but *how* big? Does it hold four, six, or seven bottles? Is it the tappit-hen under another name? Plainly, and in print, the card declared: Heidsieck Monopole 1928 (en jeroboam), Perrier Jouët (en double-magnum). But alas, for the vanity of human theories; when the two stood side by side in front of me, they were not only side by side, but also neck to neck; for the double magnum *was* the jeroboam, and the jeroboam *was* the double magnum. Why, then, I asked, do you print the two names, and so imply a difference? There was no answer; perhaps it was already too late to be logical. Yet, oddly enough, he did assert the existence of what might be called the true, platonic jeroboam, which is not the double-magnum at all, but holds six bottles. Useless, however, to seek it in Champagne. It flourishes only in Bordeaux; one more advantage for Claret." 

La Fête des Vignerons

by *Hans U. Weiss*

[*Hans Weiss, a vintage Tendril and the proprietor of Bibliotheca Gastronomica Antiquariat in Zürich, has a keen interest in this most colorful of wine celebrations. We appreciate his ready acceptance to provide us with a brief history of the Festival and to compile a bibliography of La Fête des Vignerons imprints. — Ed.*]

1999 will again see the "Fête des Vignerons" in Vevey (July 28 – August 15), the Festival celebrating Wine and Viticulture, the oldest known of its kind.

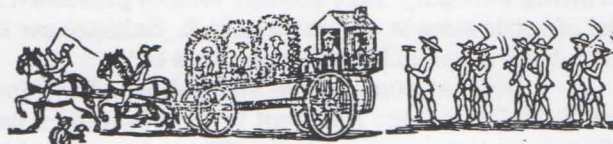
Vevey is a small city on the bench of Lake Geneva, surrounded by vineyards. Less known is that Vevey houses the world's headquarters of Nestlé, one of the biggest food companies in the world. The origin of the festival dates back four centuries and is organised by the "Confrérie des Vignerons" (Fraternity of Vintners). The Fraternity itself was probably founded in the 13th century but there are no records available, as the archives of the Confrérie burnt down in 1688 and with it all previous documents. At the beginning, Fraternity members were mostly landowners and not so much the "vignerons" who worked their lands. Not unlike a guild, each member paid a yearly fee and the Fraternity defended their rights and resolved common problems of their profession. Quite often a defunct member left a piece of land or house to the group, and this income was used to run the Fraternity and to help members in need with loans or provide them with a mortgage. Women were allowed membership but had no voting rights and could not be elected the head, "l'Abbé," of the Confrérie.

In the archives there is evidence confirming a street parade in 1651, but it is believed that the festival and street parade are older yet. But, without surviving documents, no earlier date can be established. In the beginning, the parade was organised every year. In 1741, the rhythm was changed to every three years, and from 1797 until today the "Fête" takes place once in a generation or about every twenty-five years. The Festival of 1791 was the first to be iconographically documented.

The last Festival in the 18th century, held in 1797, took on a new character. Prior to this Festival, only the street parade was for the public. The banquet, together with the award-giving ceremony for the best vignerons, were for members only. But this time 2000 seats were put up on the Place du Marché in Vevey where the participants danced and sang in front of the public. The local newspapers and the "Almanach du Messenger boiteux" (the yearly

Almanach for the area) printed strip cartoons showing the participants and chariots of the parade. These were so popular with the public that for the next festival of 1819 it was decided to publish, in addition to the "Livret-programme," an "Album souvenir" showing the parade, or the cortège as it was called. Most of these Albums are in the form of a Leporello several metres long, either folded or in single sheets. This new form was greatly acclaimed; the play of 1819 was performed twice, and the seating capacity doubled. The dances and songs were specially written and choreographed for the Festival and took the form of a play, which it still has today. By the time the next Fête of 1833 came along, a proper grandstand with 4500 seats was needed, and several performances of the play were held. The Fête grew steadily in importance and attendance; for the upcoming 1999 Fête des Vignerons a 20,000-seat stadium is being built and the play will be performed from July 28 to August 15. More than a year before the festival date, all tickets were sold out.

There is a worldwide collectors' community for the souvenir albums and other documents of the Fête. Naturally, the most sought-after items are the illustrated ones. Bibliotheca Gastronomica Antiquariat always keeps a good selection of Festival material. Please contact us in Zürich. We will be pleased to be of assistance with your collecting needs.



[FROM: *Parade de 1791*]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following list covers only the most important publications on the Fête des Vignerons. There are, in fact, hundreds of items on the festival, especially in modern times. They are all in French.

— 1778 —

Almanach du Messenger boiteux pour 1778.

The first strip cartoon of the parade appears in this Almanach.

— 1791 —

Descriptions de la Société des Vignerons et la célébration solennelle de la fête, le 17 Août 1791. Vevey, 1791. Illustrated cover, 32 pp, illustrated with a vignette on the title and 3 full-page plates (11 x 18 cm) and 1 folding plate (40 x 17.5 cm), "Ordre de la Marché."

The last festival with a parade only (no play).

— 1799 —

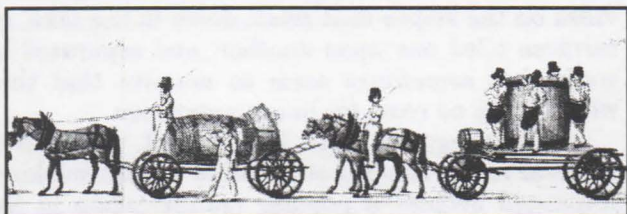
A "Livret-programme" was published but no souvenir album iconographic.

This was the first festival with a street parade as well as a performance on the Place du Marché with dances and songs by the participants.

— 1819 —

Descriptions de la Fête des vigneron, célébrée à Vevey le 5 et 6 Août 1819. Vevey, Loertscher, 1819. 37 pp of text, 8 lithographic folding plates each 45 x 18 cm.

The plates are often found handcoloured.



[FROM: 1819 Description de les Fête]

— 1833 —

Descriptions de la Fête des vigneron de Vevey célébrée à Vevey le 7 et 9 Août 1833, précédée d'une notice sur l'origine ... et la manière dont procèdent les Conseillers lors des récompenses à donner et des médailles à décerner. Suivies du Tableau de la procession de la fête, dans son ordre du marché. Vevey, Steinlen, Monnerat et Blanchard, 1833. Two parts in one. 52 pp (texte, programme), 30 engraved plates each 20 x 50 cm (giving a total length of 15 m).

Printed after drawings by Ch. Th. Steinlen, father of the famous illustrator. Plates are in black and white, but the album is often found handcoloured, some by amateurs, some by artists, e.g. Th. Steinlen.

— 1851 —

Descriptions de la Fête des vigneron, Vevey 7 et 8 Août 1851. Five planches repr. Troupes d'Honneur, Palès, Cérès, Bacchus, la Noce et 2 planches "Vue sur la Grande Place." Lithographiées par François Bocion. Each plate 50 x 36 cm.

Programme off. de la Fête des Vignerons, célébrée à Vevey 7 et 8 Août 1851. 8°, blue cover, 72 pp., lithographic frontispiece, "View of Vevey."

— 1865 —

Album officiel de la Fête des Vignerons, célébrée à Vevey les 26 et 27 Juillet 1865. Vevey, Lesser, 1865. Leporello 470 x 22 cm, lithographed in black,

drawings by H. Jenny.

Livret off. de la Fête des vigneron ... Vevey, 1865. Rose cover, 78 pp. With a "View of Vevey."

Lomard-Martin, A.F. Souvenir de la fête ..., compte rendu analytique des 3 journées. Oblong 12°. 64 pp.

Vernes-Prescott. Souvenirs des Fêtes des vigneron depuis leur origine jusqu'à nos jours. Berne, Haller, 1865. 37 pp, 1 folding plate as frontispiece and 5 plates depicting the costumes of the Fêtes of 1783, 1797, 1819, 1833 and 1865.

Several times reprinted. The 3rd ed. by Loertscher, Vevey, 1865, had 150 pp and 4 additional plates (folded).

— 1889 —

Album officiel de la Fête ... Vevey, Loertscher, 1889. Dessins de E. Vuillemin d'après les costumes de P. Vallouy. Oblong 8°. Leporello 600 x 17 cm, in colour. Illustrated cloth cover.

This album was also issued under paper cover.

Livret officiel de la Fête ... Vevey, Loertscher, 1889. 18.5 x 11.5 cm, 96 pp + 2 plates. View of Vevey. Cloth cover.

Livret was also issued in paper cover.

— 1905 —

Album off. de la Fête ..., célébrée les 4, 5, 7, 10 et 11 Août. Vevey, Säuberlin & Pfeiffer, 1905. Suite of 16 color plates, each 25.4 x 32.4 cm., by E. Bieler under illustrated cover.

Livret off. de la Fête ... Vevey, 1905. Green cover, 124 pp with illustrations.

Souvenir de la Fête ... 1905, édité par la Patrie Suisse, 1905. Illustrated boards. Oblong 4°. 30 photographs with an opposite text leaf for each.

Boissonas, Fred. Instantanés au téléphot. Oblong 4°. 4 pp of text and 16 full-page plates. Illustrated grey cover.

— 1927 —

Album officiel de la Fête ... Vevey, 1927. Vevey / Lausanne, Klausfelder / Payot. Oblong 8°. Leporello 7 m long, 13.5 cm high. Drawings and costumes by E. Bieler.

Livret off. de la Fête ... Vevey, 1927. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, et 9 Août 1927. Jayet & Diebold, 12 x 20 cm. 118 pp. Illustrated with vignettes and views.

Album des Photographies off. de MM de Jongh et Perrochet, Vevey, 1927. 24.5 x 17 cm. 36 photographs, 6 pp text and illustrations.

— 1955 —

Album off. de la Fête ... 1955. Vevey, Säuberlin & Pfeiffer. Oblong 8°. Leporello, in colours after drawings by H.R. Fost. Length 6 meters, height 13 cm.

Livret off. - Programme de la Fête ... 1955. Vevey, Klausfelder, 1955. 104 pp, 12 x 20 cm. Illustrations in text and plates.

Major, J.C. Petite histoire d'une grande Fête. Souvenirs et anecdotes de la Fête ... 1955. Vevey, Klausfelder, 1955. 15 x 21 cm. 48 pp. Illustrated with photos and drawings.

— 1977 —

Album off. de la Fête ... 1977. "Cortège de la Fête..." Vevey, Säuberlin & Pfeiffer, 1977. Leporello printed in colours on black paper after drawings by J. Monod. Length 7 metres x 12 cm. Published with a pamphlet with the text by H. Deblue. 48 pp.

[Livret] Programme off. de la Fête ... 1977. 30.7 x 14.8.

Imsand, M., et al. Fête ... Vevey, 1977. Livre souvenir off. Texte de Jacques Clavel. Lausanne, Payot, 1977. 24.5 x 26.5 cm. Illustrated with photos in colours by M. Imsand.



[In concert with this festive spirit, we offer a visit to the 1955 Fête, as recorded in *Wine and Food* (Winter 1955), the quarterly journal of the Wine & Food Society. The Society's permission to reprint this excerpt is sincerely appreciated. — Ed.]

LA FÊTE DES VIGNERONS, VEVEY by Auberry Prior

I came to Vevey by steamer, the ideal way to approach this remarkable part of Switzerland. In the distance are the mountains, real mountains with their sides draped in black forests, and their peaks capped with snow.

Nearer at hand lies Lavaux. There grow the vines on the slopes that reach down to the lake, on terraces piled one upon another, and separated by walls that sometimes seem so massive that they would leave no room for living vegetation.

Set against this background, the Vevey Festival is the natural outburst of a hard-working, contented people—a popular manifestation in the true sense of the word. For this is a people's festival, the Winegrowers' Festival, a time when growers demonstrate their pleasure and gratitude.

Since the early nineteenth century, there have been seven Festivals; each time the number of participants and spectators has grown until La Fête des Vignerons has become world famous.

This year's celebrations, held during the first fortnight of August, consisted of eleven performances given in a specially constructed stadium in the Market Place, three processions through the streets of Vevey, and a Venetian Fête on the lake.

Of these, the most important, the focal point, was the performance in the stadium. It has been variously described: a poem, a symphony of colour, a hymn with swelling strains to glorify the cultivation of the soil. It is all these things and more. Perhaps it can best be called a work of art conceived by poets, musicians, painters and choreographers. Its subject is the cycle of the seasons, beginning with winter and culminating in autumn, the season of fulfillment.

This magnificent spectacle automatically falls into four acts, to which are added a prologue and an epilogue. The prologue opens with the ceremonial entrance of the guard of honour preceded by heralds, horsemen, the company of the Cent Suisses, and the banners of the Swiss Confederation and Cantons. A colourful opening, indeed! When the guard of honour has taken its place round the central arena, the best winegrowers are crowned, and medals and other awards are distributed.

The procession of Dionysus inaugurates the representation of winter, evoking in succession woodcraft, woodcutters, new wine, and the sowing of

grain in the furrows. This is a colourful act with a wedding and groups of gypsies to give it gaiety.

When spring approaches and the furrows have turned green, Pales' procession enters the arena, followed by girls, who make their traditional offerings of flowers and dances to the goddess. At this stage, the first threat of danger is felt; a realistic ballet symbolizes the attack of frost on the vine-stocks. Careful husbandry nullifies the threatened danger, and after thinning out the vine leaves, girls indulge in a merry May dance with the winegrowers.

The sun's archers herald the coming of summer, impersonated by Ceres and her followers. Another danger looms large: the attack of the parasites on the vineyards. This ballet, representing the triumph of industry over the powers of evil, is one of the highlights of the whole performance. Once the danger has been averted, and while the grapes are still ripening, the call of the mountains assumes prominence. Herdsmen with their flocks of sheep enter the arena, and rustic dances lead to the inevitable *ranz des vaches*.

Gaiety forms the keynote of the autumn spectacle. There is laughter in the vineyards, and dancing and singing around the presses. Bacchus, the god of wine arrives. In his chariot drawn by a team of black horses, and with his escort of fauns and bacchantes, he comes to lend his patronage. Here is the climax — the successful end to a year's work well done. A frenzied bacchanal is followed by a farandole in which every group of dancers and singers takes part. But for a stroke of dramatic genius, a desire for something even more spectacular, the performance could have ended there.

The farandole is abruptly interrupted by the arrival into the vast arena of a procession composed of all the remaining performers and guards of honour. It is an enthralling ending, and the participants leave to the strains of the last triumphant hymn, the thundering of cannon and the pealing of bells.

Four thousand people have taken part in this gigantic rite, most of them inhabitants of the region. For them it has meant months of hard work, discipline and expense. Not only have they given of their time to attend rehearsals, but they have each borne the cost of a colourful and elaborate costume. To them must be accorded a great share of the gratitude of the multitudes of spectators who came to Vevey from all over the world.

Apart from the Band of the Garde Républicaine de Paris and a few professional soloists and ballerinas engaged from abroad, it was an all-Swiss production, and the credit must go to Switzerland in general, and to the district around Vevey in particular.


The Authorship of *THE WINE QUESTION* CONSIDERED ... considered

A Bibliographic Note
by Isaac Oelgart



In December of 1824, in response to James Warre's *The Past, Present & Probably the Future State of the Wine Trade* ... (London, 1823) and Fleetwood Williams' *Observations of the State of the Wine Trade* ... (London, 1824), an anonymous author, referring to himself as "A Portuguese," published *The Wine Question Considered, or Observations on the Pamphlets of Mr. James Warre ... and Mr. Fleetwood Williams*. No author is listed in the massive bibliography on Port issued by the Instituto do Vinho do Porto (3 volumes: 1945, 1947, 1952). James Gabler in his *Wine into Words* erroneously lists Joseph James Forrester as the author. While Forrester was certainly sympathetic to the Portuguese and a prolific writer on many matters of Port, he was born in 1809 and was only fifteen years old at the time of the pamphlet's publication and did not go to Portugal until 1831, seven years after the appearance of *The Wine Question*

I recently acquired a copy of *The Wine Question Considered* ... which points to the authorship of the work. Coincidentally, my copy belonged to Joseph James Forrester, his signature "Jos. James Forrester" in his style, appears on the title page. On the half-title, just below the printed title, in a contemporary hand — not Forrester's — is written, "By José Ferreira Borges" and below that the year "1824." While circumstantial, given the provenance of ownership and contemporary nature of the handwriting, it does point to Borges [de Castro] as being the author.

As a bibliographer I am cautious by nature, and while I am 90% sure that Borges is the author, more work needs to be done in determining who Borges was, when he lived, and his role in the Port trade. 

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LA FÊTE DES VIGNERONS — 1791 Parade Scroll in the Museum "Fête des Vignerons"